



## Volunteer Handbook

Revised May 2014





Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to Bridgeway Academy!! We are pleased that you have chosen to take some time out of your busy schedule to volunteer with our program. Depending on your availability and where you will be volunteering, we may have you attend a more formal training at some point; however, we want to give you some helpful information to get you started right now.

If at any point you have any questions or concerns about your time at Bridgeway Academy, please feel free to contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Ellie Preston or one of us, our Business Manager, a Classroom Coordinator or Therapy Coordinator. I personally can best be reached at [enealy@bridgewayohio.org](mailto:enealy@bridgewayohio.org).

At Bridgeway Academy, our focus is to help students to reach their highest potential. We provide collaborative, integrated therapy and educational services to individuals with disabilities and their families. We provide classrooms for Early Intervention through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade as well as Speech Therapy, Music Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Behavioral/Psychological Services. We appreciate your time as you join us in making a difference in the lives of our clients, students, and their families!

Thank you!

Erin K. Nealy & Abby S. David

Co-Founder/Executive Directors

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**BRIDGEWAY ACADEMY**

614-262-7520 | 2500 Medary Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43202

[www.bridgewayohio.org](http://www.bridgewayohio.org)

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## Areas to Volunteer

There are many areas to volunteer within Bridgeway Academy. We are also open to ideas you might have based on certain skills you have to offer or feel might be beneficial to our center. Please feel free to share any ideas with a director!

The following are some possible areas you might be asked to help:

- **Welcome Desk**
  - o Sitting at the Welcome Desk to greet and sign in visitors
  - o Assist teachers/therapists in creating, coloring, cutting, and/or laminating educational/therapy materials
  - o Assist in communicating when students/visitors arrive with the rest of the building
- **Lunch/Recess Duty**
  - o Our students always need more assistance during lunch and recess hours (from 11-1 PM daily). The role of the volunteer during this time is to assist students during lunch (sometime heating lunches, assisting with opening packages, keeping students safe, etc.), or recess time (playing and engaging students, keeping them safe).
- **Before or After Care**
  - o Bridgeway Academy offers an aftercare program daily from 3:00 to 5:30 PM and a before care program from 8:00-9:00 AM. Volunteers assist students in activities, engage in play, and help to maintain structure and safety during this play based time.
- **Daycare**
  - o Bridgeway Academy has a STAFF ONLY daycare with infants and toddlers. Volunteers are always welcome to play with and help out with the children!
- **Classroom Volunteer**
  - o Assist classroom teachers with the structure, programming, and management of the students
  - o Assist classrooms by creating materials
  - o Assist students during down time and/or at centers
- **Building Beautification**
  - o Assist to keep the building and/or grounds clean and organized
  - o Upkeep/Larger projects like building, painting, creating items for classrooms/therapists
- **Special Events**

## Scheduling/Hours

Bridgeway Academy is generally open from 8 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday. There are often volunteer opportunities available during these hours; however, our school program runs from 8:45-3:15 Monday through Thursday and 8:45-2:00 on Fridays. We appreciate our volunteers coming to help out for any duration or frequency; however it is usually most successful for the organization and the volunteer to schedule some regular intervals of time.

## Cancellations

As a volunteer, we greatly appreciate your consistency and reliability. If you schedule a time to volunteer, please do your best to arrive when and where you make the commitment to do so. If you can't make it for a previously scheduled volunteer opportunity, please try to let us know in advance. This is best done in writing, via a note in a director mailbox (even better) in an e-mail to [enealy@bridgewayohio.org](mailto:enealy@bridgewayohio.org). If you must cancel that day because of illness or emergency, please call the staff call-off hotline at 614-262-7520, extension 199.

## Expectations

1. What is NOT expected:
  - a. We do not expect our volunteers to plan or implement lessons
  - b. We do not expect our volunteers to do toileting/diaper changing, especially NOT alone with students
  - c. We do not expect our volunteers to provide their own materials
  - d. We do not expect our volunteers to maintain behaviors or put themselves in danger
  - e. We do not expect our volunteers to run programs or take data
  - f. We do not expect our volunteers to do anything that may make them uncomfortable.
2. Paperwork:

Because Bridgeway Academy is regulated by many licensing boards, anyone who interacts with students on a regular basis must go through a screening process which may include the following:

  - Medical verification form
  - State and Federal Background Check
  - Reference Check
  - Other Job and Family Services paperwork

Additionally, please stop at the Welcome Desk before each shift and sign in and out, initialing your time in/out, and pick up a VOLUNTEER BADGE.

3. Responsibilities:
  - a. Your responsibilities may change depending on your interests and our area of need. Overall, a lead teacher, Coordinator, or Director should go over his/her expectations with you each time you come, or when your shift/classroom/volunteer area changes.
  - b. If you are ever uncomfortable with anything you are asked to do, please communicate with a Director or Supervisor. We appreciate this communication and will NOT think less of you!
  - c. As a volunteer, we expect that you will not be talking on your cell phone, texting, or surfing the web during your volunteer hours UNLESS you are working at the Welcome Desk. If you must utilize a personal device, please step out of the classroom/therapy environment.
4. Attire: We have a fairly casual dress code for our staff at Bridgeway Academy. This is partially because our teachers and therapists are VERY hands-on in their approach. This means individuals often are

down on the floor, playing, and getting dirty. Please wear clothing and shoes that you are comfortable with the possibility of them becoming soiled. Please wear appropriate undergarments. Additionally, please stop by the welcome desk before your volunteer shift and pick up a VOLUNTEER BADGE. It may be more important that you know What NOT to Wear:

- a. Short shorts or skirts (you may be on the floor)
- b. Spaghetti straps or revealing shirts
- c. Flip Flops/Sandals in which your toes/feet could get injured
- d. Large Jewelry that could get tangled, damaged, or pulled out by a student
- e. Clothing with profanity or inappropriate graphics/pictures

Please keep in mind that as a VOLUNTEER, you help to represent Bridgeway Academy. Visitors and parents may not always be able to distinguish between a paid staff member and a volunteer. Please try to represent Bridgeway Academy in the most professional and respectable manner!

#### 5. Safety:

- a. **Your Safety:** It is your responsibility to stay safe while volunteering at Bridgeway Academy. We cannot be held liable for any damages to your person or property. Our students sometimes exhibit problem behaviors including aggression toward others. If you observe a student working through a tough time, please step back and allow a teacher or therapist to step in. Please stay alert when working with students. This means staying OFF of cell phones or personal computers when working with students.
- b. **Student Safety:** Your duty as a volunteer may sometimes be to assist in maintaining student safety. If you feel a student may be engaging in a dangerous activity, please step in or alert a paid staff member to assist you. Do not hesitate to do what you can to maintain student safety whenever possible, without jeopardizing your own safety.

### Policies and Procedures

#### Confidentiality

In the context of your volunteering you will have access to information that must be kept confidential concerning our students, clients, company and other third parties with whom we deal. Bridgeway Academy places a high value on its confidential information. Volunteers agree that they will protect the confidential information, which may be disclosed to the volunteer by the company.

**I. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.** The term "Confidential Information" means any information or material, which is proprietary to the company, whether or not owned or developed by the company, which is not generally known other than by the company, and which an volunteer may obtain through any direct or indirect contact with the company.

- a. Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to the following examples:  
Business records and plans, cost and pricing information, client or student lists, purchasing records, accounting and financial data, marketing plans, research and development activities,

pending projects and proposals, sales data, computer processes and programs, compensation information, confidential employment information, and trade secrets, discounts, costs, computer programs and listings, source code and/or object code, copyrights and other intellectual property, website access codes/passwords, specifics of client contracts, client statistical information and any other proprietary information.

b. Confidential Information does not include:

Matters of public knowledge that result from disclosure by the company, information disclosed by operation as required by law and any other information that both parties agree in writing is not confidential.

Bridgeway Academy abides by strict guidelines regarding confidentiality of any and all information about students, clients, and families. Volunteers may not disclose information that can identify a child or family in any context (names, ages, diagnosis, programming, medical, psychological, and educational information.) Information may be considered confidential regardless of its form. Your confidentiality obligations extend to Confidential Information included in computer files and other electronic formats.

**II. NON-DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.** Volunteers understand and acknowledge that the Confidential Information has been developed or obtained by the company by the investment of significant time, effort and expense, and that the Confidential Information is a valuable, special, and unique asset of the company, which provides them with a significant competitive advantage. Volunteers agree to hold in confidence and to not disclose, under any circumstances, the Confidential Information to any person or entity. Additionally, volunteers agree:

- a. To protect and safeguard the Confidential Information against unauthorized use, publication or disclosure.
- b. Not to use any of the Confidential Information except for company business purposes.
- c. Not to – directly or indirectly – in any way, reveal, report, publish, disclose, transfer (manually or electronically) or use any of the Confidential Information except as authorized by the company.
- d. Not to use any Confidential Information to unfairly compete or obtain an unfair advantage against the company in any commercial activity.
- e. Not to restrict access to the Confidential Information to company Directors and/or volunteers who clearly need such access to carry out normal business purposes.
- f. To comply with any other reasonable security measure requested by the company.

It is Bridgeway Academy's policy to make confidential information available only to those persons who have a need for such information, who have been authorized in writing to receive it, and who have been advised of and will protect its confidential nature. Bridgeway Academy prohibits disclosure or distribution of its confidential information to unauthorized individuals. We may adopt security procedures from time to time to help protect our confidential information. It is important that you abide by our policies and procedures concerning confidential information. It is also important that you report actual and potential violations of these policies to your supervisor or to a Director.

## Behavior Management

There are many students who exhibit problem behaviors as part of their autism diagnosis. Problem behaviors are any behavior that poses a danger to a student or other students, could cause damage to property, or interferes with a student's ability to learn or function.

We have some children who are on specific behavior support plans. You should not work 1:1 with a student on a behavior plan or with a student who has aggressive behaviors.

If a problem behavior occurs while you are working with a student, try **NOT** to call attention or react to the behavior, and request the support of a classroom staff member.

Many students have a group contingency plan which you may be able to help classroom teachers implement. When in doubt, ask a classroom teacher how you can help!

**VOLUNTEER RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & LIABILITY STATEMENT**

By signing below, I acknowledge and understand the following:

- I have received, read, understand and agree to follow the policies stated in this handbook.
- I understand that if I have any questions regarding this handbook, I may ask a supervisor or management for an explanation.
- This handbook is for informational purposes only and that nothing in this handbook is meant to constitute conditions of employment.
- This handbook does not create an express or implied contract.
- Any statements or understandings that are inconsistent or contrary to this handbook will not be effective unless they are in writing signed on behalf of Bridgeway Academy by a person authorized to do so.
- The contents of this handbook may change from time to time and Bridgeway Academy will use reasonable efforts to communicate the changes. Bridgeway Academy, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to make any changes to this handbook, or terminate it in whole or in part at any time, with or without notice to me.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

**VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT  
WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK  
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

I understand that my participation in Bridgeway Academy volunteer programs, activities, classrooms, therapies, and/or maintenance is a voluntary activity, and that I am donating my time and my labor by my own free choice. I agree to perform my assigned tasks in a responsible manner. I hereby agree to **ASSUME THE RISKS OF PROPERTY DAMAGE, INJURY, ILLNESS, OR DEATH** in any way associated with my participation in this activity. I agree to **RELEASE, DEFEND, INDEMNIFY, AND HOLD HARMLESS** Bridgeway Academy, its officials, employees, board of directors, representatives, volunteers, and agents for any and all rights and claims for damages, including attorney fees, I now, or may hereafter have, whether known or unknown, in law or in equity, and arising from or in any way connected with my participation in Bridgeway Academy's volunteer activities. I agree that the terms stated herein shall also serve as a **WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK** for my heirs, estate, executor, administrator, assignees, and for all members of my family.

**PHOTO RELEASE**

Furthermore, I give my permission to have photos and/or video recordings taken of me for publicity purposes during Bridgeway Academy activities even though I will not receive compensation of any kind for appearing in such photos or video recordings.

**CAUTION**

**I acknowledge that I have carefully read this WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK and fully understand that I am waiving any right that I may now or hereafter have to bring a legal action to assert any claim against Bridgeway Academy in connection with my participation in this volunteer activity.**

I accept the conditions printed above:

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*Participant Signature*

*Date*

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*Print Participant Name*

A parent or guardian signature is required if the participant is under 18 years of age. By signing this **WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK** on behalf of a minor, the undersigned parent or guardian is agreeing to be bound by the above conditions on behalf of him or herself and on behalf of the participant.

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Parent or Guardian Signature

*Date*

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